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Agenda item 5
High-level segment

Statement submitted by *Imam* Ali's Popular Students Relief Society, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

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* The present statement is issued without formal editing.

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Statement

Every human being by nature wants to create justice. Historically, this nature has led to many social movements, changes in social and political structures, and even wars. These changes in many instances have led to imprisonment of equality and justice seekers and even has cost great people's lives in the history of humanity. One of the most well-known of these changes might be the Anti-apartheid movement in South Africa that has worldwide fame. A movement against racism. The leader of this movement, Nelson Mandela spent close to 27 years in prison and paid a heavy price for the victory of this movement. The civil rights movement of African Americans in the United States of America (1955–1968) and renaissance in Europe are considered among big and significant changes in the world that are driven by the equality and justice seeking spirit.

In the Islamic Republic of Iran, the two Islamic and Constitutional revolutions happened according to this spirit of equality and justice less than 70 years apart. But the question is in an instant that a social movement that have come from this same human nature gains success what guarantees its survival and prevent its distraction from the main goals.

The experience of developed countries especially after renaissance in Europe shows that one of the most important ways of empowering members of a society to seek justice and equality, is not just formed by individual movements and emphasize on individualism but happens with the collective efforts. This issue can be true according to two ideas. First, in collective movements, when it is directed in the right direction, collective wisdom and having different perspectives lead to a better outcome compared to when the issue is looked at by just one person. Second, one person no matter how great he/she is in action and thinking, bringing along people and society with a social change by itself is an important and crucial point. When a movement has an individualistic aspect, even if it is correct, the society would not feel included in it due to members of the society not participating or in the best case they would feel less belonging and won't participate in its efforts. But when a collective effort towards justice and equality happens, the feeling of belonging is formed because different members of the society participate, and this would lead to a better outcome. Therefore, formation of people-based institutions is an experienced way that has been done in developed societies that can direct members of the society towards a better path to demand equality and justice and lead to sustainable and slow changes in society. It is under these actions that the demands of the society are reached to politicians and policy makers through a clear mean. In addition, it leads to an enforcement of demanding from different groups of the society to build a society based on equality and development of culture. Ultimately it leads to a form of stability in the political and social structure. This stability creates an opportunity for peaceful social changes that are beneficial for people, especially underserved populations. Reinforcement of the civil institutions, in addition to demanding and empowering of members of the society to seek justice and equality leads to supplying demands of the majority of people, developing of culture, and reaching a mutual language with major policy maker so convey real demands of civil society. In addition to these it creates stability of the political and social structure that is beneficial for majority of the people and decision makers in higher levels of the society.